794 the calpul must have a powerful nagual, through which they can learn about the private lives of their subordinates. This is usually the way they know who has enough money to pay for a feast, who can occupy special jobs, and which sinners deserve punishment.

Religious Life

The Catholic Cult

177 797 795 795 778 [346] [361] [776] [796] [794] The beliefs and religious practices introduced by Catholic missionaries in the 16th century have been adapted to the aboriginal culture. The largest and most important building of the village is the church, situated on the east side of the ceremonial center. In it are the image of the patron saint of the group, the holy cross, and lesser saints. The most profound ceremonies take place before the altar of these saints, who are looked upon as mediators between God and men, and are performed by the cabildos de misa, dzunubiles, and other elderly men of high rank who know both Catholic and Indian ritual.

346 796 795 [782] During the ceremonies the altar is decorated with flowers and with paper and ribbons of different colors. The floor is covered with pine needles, which give off an agreeable fragrance. Candles and copal are part of every prayer and ceremony, the copal having been used since pre-Hispanic times.

795 782 Common prayers of people who visit the center also have a place. These people have to enter the church and make an offering of candles to the patron saint. The prayers follow a formal pattern but vary in content according to the need and mood of the supplant. Each individual talks intimately to the saint, specifying the help he needs, much as he would to a relative or a friend in whom he has absolute confidence. The two most frequent matters of petition are health and food, as the latter depends almost entirely on the condition of the cornfield; people pray that "it may not be damaged by the wind, or by cold, sun, birds, or plagues."

[P.221-A]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

Change in soil is probably the reason for change in vegetation. The tropical forest grows on black humus soil and the pine country is underlain by a red sandstone which weathers into a heavy red clay. The contact of this sandstone with the limestone country on which leaf trees grow lies about an hour's ride north of the village of Bachajon.

The pine country is very hilly, the trees are scattered over a carpet of vivid green grass cut by the strong red line of the soil of the trail like a scar (fig. 195).

It was like riding through a magnificent park, up and down the hills and across small streams. Our poor animals had a hard time on the slippery trail. La Farge's horse gave out, and he had to change his saddle to a spare animal.

The Bachajon Indian village came in sight, lying on a hill in the middle of the valley. It was well after noon when we reached the dilapidated, grass-roofed and mud-walled huts clustered around the huge ruin of an old Spanish stone church. The Indians use a new church which they have built of the same material as their houses.

The house of the Government agent lies in the middle of the village and here we were quartered in a room, the floor of which had just been covered with a carpet of fresh pine needles.

The Bachajon Indians are reputed to be unfriendly to all travellers, so we were not surprised when the Indian chief of the village told us that he could not furnish fodder for our animals or men to carry some of our cargo. To all our questions he answered "Mayuk," or in English, "Ain't got none." But when the chief, a little later, heard from our Encanto men that we had been friendly to them, and that furthermore, we were friends of the big father President in Mexico City, he changed his attitude.

The Government agent is sent to the Indian village by the civil authorities of the neighbouring Mexican town of Ocosingo. He is supposed to collect certain taxes, raise labourers for public works in the Mexican town, and help the Indians with their affairs. He is highly unpopular among the Indians, who counteract his orders through a remarkable system of passive resistance. They say "yes" to everything and do nothing. The only reason the Indians tolerate him is because he keeps a small store and sells liquor. The Indian is very fond of sugar-cane rum, and every Saturday and Sunday all the villagers generally get drunk. The agent complained bitterly that the Indians were not selling him any food supplies and was astonished when they sold us chickens and eggs.

Most of the Bachajon Indians live hidden away in the bush. Only the families of the chief and the village officials live around the old church ruins.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

131 the Guatemala border, which it overlaps at Gracias á Dios. They
101 do not reach the highest part of the mountains. For the most part, they live in isolated tribal groups, although in some places, notably in Ocosingo Valley, they are attached to *haciendas* and *fincas*. Much of the easternmost country marked in the maps as belonging to them and the Chol is actually uninhabited wilderness, or, if occupied at all, is Lacandone territory.

101 Their immediate neighbours of the Highlands are the Zotzil and
197 Chaneabal. The former speak a language differentiated from Tzeltal only by a shift of *a*, *c*, and *b* to Zotzil *o*, *i*, and *m*, respectively.* Chaneabal is spoken by a small group near Comitan. The people of that place say that the language is simply Tzeltal influenced by Mames contact. The list given in Appendix III, seems to bear this out. To the north, and around Tumbalá, are the Chol Indians, whose language is quite distinct, but, of all the other Mayance tongues, probably the nearest to the Highland group.

197 The language itself has been variously named Cendal, Tzendal, Cendales, Tzental, and Tzeltal. I have taken the latter form, as it most nearly represents the Indians' own form, *ts'eltal*, varied in careless speech to *tceltal*. The villages are spoken of as tribes, be-
197 cause each one forms a separate, self-governing unit. There is no
628 evidence of cohesion within the language-group as a whole save during certain periods of uprisings. Individual villages may resemble tribes of another speech more closely than they do those of
104 their own. The Mexican spelling of Tzeltal names is given first, followed by the phonetic spelling (See Appendix III), and the translation, if known.

101 The Bachajon live on the threshold of the pine country. Their
131 farms may be found hidden away in the thick jungle land of ma-
137 hogany and palms, through which their little hidden trails lead to houses tucked away out of sight of alien travelers. Altogether, they
161 are estimated at five thousand families, but it is doubtful whether evidences of more than fifty farms could be seen by one passing along the trail through the heart of their country. The capital, Bachajon Village, is among the pines. There, periodically, the
648 Spaniards used to round them up, that they might be more easily policed, and for the benefit of the church established there. Once
346 there was a fine, stone church and a neat Cabildo with white walls, colonnade, and tiled roof. Both have been wrecked by the Indians,
344 apparently because they did not like to be reminded of alien domination, for from the wreckage of the old church, they took tiles to roof their new one, and they have a straw-thatched Cabildo for the Maestro, or government agent.

*Starr (1903) quoting Sanchez (1880).

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Cancuc

broidery along all the seams, at the cuffs, and over what would be a pocket in a European shirt. Trousers are either very short "shorts," or replaced by a cotton breech-clout. Hats are seldom worn. Most men carry woolen blankets woven by the Chamula Indians. The red sashes are knotted in front (fig. 322).

The women's dress is the same as at Tenango, but without any decoration, and with a shorter skirt. Their hair is worn in two braids, or done up in a knot over the forehead, forward of where the tump-line is placed.

Fig. 321—Cancuc, Chis. Men on the Cabildo porch.

These people, for all their turbulence, are very devout, although, like many who are more civilized, they leave most of the expression to the women. The church is swept out daily by women appointed for the purpose. Along about five o'clock in the afternoon all the women drift in, singly or in small groups, pray for awhile, and come out. Looking in the door one sees the large interior almost pitch dark, cut here and there with tiny, yellow candle-flames, and hears a monotonous sing-song drone of chanted prayers. Their festivals center about the church. In this connection they have a very curious custom. There are two scaffolds by the plaza (fig. 323) very small platforms on four rickety poles about four meters high, surrounded by an insufficient railing, arched over with palm branches, and reached by a frail-looking ladder. The drinking which, as was explained in the last chapter, is an essential part of any ceremony, must all take place on top of these scaffolds. It is indeed a miracle that every fiesta does not cause a score of broken necks.

While wandering around to see what he could see, the writer was hailed by an elderly woman who gave him to understand by signs

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Tenejapa

shadow, another wall far behind. A Mexican told us that Tenejapa lay in the valley thus enclosed. With the cool evening air our animals picked up, taking us along at a good trot. We swung around a green dell, up under one cliff into the opening, over the threshold of a ridge. Some Indians sitting there waved to us. Beyond was a tiny, lush meadow and a brook where some Mexicans were making clay tiles. There was another rocky hillock, around which we swung to find ourselves trotting down a well-cobbled street lined with little white cottages, white-walled gardens, and roses. To us, looking for something yet wilder than the villages we had seen, the neat houses and candle-lit casement windows, the doors of tiny shops, the flowers, and the shingled roofs were an utter surprise. In the streets was a sprinkling of touselled-headed Indians

FIG. 329—Tenejapa, Chis. Church and Plaza.

and Ladino people of much fairer complexion than the typical Lowland Mexicans. We rode past a gaunt, high-shouldered stone church into the plaza, a field of about two acres planted with a few trees, and with a fine town fountain of icy water in the middle (fig. 328). Along one side ran the Cabildo, a long, one-storied building with a very deep veranda, gorgeously painted in cubist fashion, red, yellow, green and blue. Here we halted to unpack and present our credentials to the *Presidente Municipal*.

Tenejapa is really two towns in one. There is the Ladino town, around which lie the houses of some eight thousand Indians, by local

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango
Tenejapa

Amatenango lies in an open valley. It is estimated at three hundred houses, each in a fenced yard of good size, and shaded with fruit trees. The houses are large and well built, of mud and grass thatch, with porches. The small church and Town Hall are tiled-roof and stuccoed. The fields, which lie close around the town, and the gardens in the town itself are watered by a stream brought down a very pretty, roaring flume from higher land behind the village. The irrigation system is fairly elaborate, and is unique in this area as far as we know.

The pottery, which is their chief product, is almost all of one shape, a sphere, with three handles and a narrow bottle-neck with a flat lip. The decoration does not vary. Both shape and design, how-

Fig. 333—Tenejapa, Chis. Indians at the Town Hall.

ever, are of considerable charm. The polish is fine and smooth, giving an even golden-red colour all over, with the decoration in a deep, reddish brown. No such fine, finished work is done by other tribes in the area. The pots are baked by placing them on a rectangle of boards, two or more meters square, around a hot fire. The woman in charge turns them until they are done (fig. 333). These pots are carried by the men as far as San Cristóbal, where they are redistributed, and to Nenton in Guatemala. Their industry is sufficient to enable them to maintain mules for carrying their goods, although both men and beasts are equally loaded.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

building. When they leave the cabildo, they take their staffs as a mark of office.

The central room serves as a courthouse, a place for legislating and administering town affairs, for performing marriages, recording births and deaths, and for inaugurating new officials. Everyone who goes to the courthouse has a specific purpose for being there. Regular attendance means that an established seat and place in the order of greeting and drinking is accorded—even to the anthropologist.

Each day the civil officials assemble at the town hall about eight in the morning and take their accustomed places. Sitting is an official act. In listing the duties of the president, for example, "sitting at the table" was given first in order of importance of his functions by two informants, and in the case of the judges, "sitting at the bench" was listed first.

The president opens official mail and dictates responses to the secretary, now an Indian of the village, who pecks out the letters on an ancient portable typewriter. Since typing is a new skill for him, he makes many errors, and his retrials are accepted with patience and sometimes joking by the president and judges. When the president has an order for the police, it is transmitted to the regidor, who in turn passes it on to the police. The police always carry out their orders in pairs. Interruptions occur as petitioners enter. Men come in to announce the birth of a child and receive the name of the saint's day from the president, who consults the calendar; creditors arrive to request that a debtor be jailed for nonpayment of a loan or interest. When official visitors arrive from the I.N.I. or from the Ejido Commission, the president usually rises and stands at attention, agreeing with everything said. If it is an affair of some importance, the discussion may be continued in the schoolhouse, since the teacher has gained political importance in the town. The Indians rarely oppose departmental or federal officials directly; when they are unwilling to comply with an order, they stall for time, figuring that in the long run time is with them.

When the cabildo serves as a courtroom, it provides a setting for airing not only the grievance which precipitated the court action, but also the entire spectrum of personal relations involved. More women than men resort to court, since the drinking customs for men mean that they are more often the violators of norms. Behavior in the courtroom is controlled by a

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

as lawyers. The defendant is sometimes accompanied by supporters who feel that he has a case. The failure of parents to accompany a defendant, regardless of his age, is attributed to their shame over their child's misbehavior and their own failure to train him properly. The judge does not limit himself to passing judgment but also counsels the defendant as to how he should behave.

The town hall is usually shut and locked at noon unless some business requires more time. In the evening about six, the officials return to take their same posts. They sit with their arms drawn inside their woolen jackets for warmth. After a half an hour they drift home. People rely on the presence of officials rather than particular actions to maintain social control, and it is their appearance at regular hours that assures the villagers that the town is being well run.

Local autonomy depends primarily on retaining social control functions. Civil officials try to settle disputes locally and avoid the entry of Ladino officials from the departmental capital, although the judges and president will threaten the defendant with taking the case to the department if they cannot get compliance. The number of cases referred to the capital has been increasing since 1950 as Table 32 shows. In 1951 the federal government began to fine local officials who failed to report homicide cases and accidental death. The local officials complied, but departmental courts were unable to bring action in over half the cases. No action was taken in 72 cases, or 54 percent, in comparison with 62 cases, or 46 percent, in which action was taken. Domestic cases, except for one of adultery, are adequately handled in local courts and do not appear in the departmental records. The trend shows an increasing number of cases of crimes against persons in comparison to crimes against property, an index to the breakdown in social control processes.

The Church

The church has been built and on two occasions rebuilt—when the tower was struck by lightning—with funds collected locally from household heads. Damage to the church was attributed to the patron saint of the neighboring town of Oxchuk who, the people say, was fighting with their patroness, Santa Lucía. The townspeople feel that they own the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 301]

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

The townspeople feel that they own the church, and many resent the intrusion of the priest who resides sometimes two or three days a week in the adjoining rectory. In the past five years, however, the priest has succeeded in asserting more control over the church: he has forbidden drinking in the church or in the courtyard, a prohibition that resulted in an open confrontation with the leading cofrade (Chapter 9); and he now controls the keys to the church and to the money boxes, formerly the responsibility of the fiscal. The two lay sisters who are in residence during the week hold the keys and are in charge of the upkeep of the church.

People always show respect for the church by removing their hats as they pass the entrance, even when they are at a distance. As they enter the church, they always kneel and cross themselves. They may spit on the floor of the church, for this is not a sign of disrespect.

The complementarity of church and cabildo is still formally recognized in ceremonial events: participants bow to the church and then to the cabildo during processions. The transfer of sacred symbols from one locale to the other at the time of the inauguration of civil and religious officials ceremonially signifies the integration of civil and religious authority, despite the growing separation in day-to-day functions in each of the domains.

The church serves as a staging platform for the images and symbolic offerings to them in the annual cycle of ceremonies. During the nine days of ceremony accorded to the major saints, their images are moved to the center of the altar or to the center of the nave. The staging effects are particularly notable during the fiesta of Holy Week, when the reenactment of the crucifixion is performed in the nave. The mayordomos, under the direction of the fiscal and the lay sisters, move the saints about and prepare adornments of flowers and pine needles.

The church is the locus for the weekly mass given by the priest. The men stand on the left side of the church (facing the altar), while the women kneel or sit on the floor to the right. A few benches near the altar are occupied by the Ladinos of the area who attend the mass. The lay sisters indicate to the congregation when they should kneel and rise in response to the cues of the sermon or mass.

In addition to these scheduled events, the church serves as a locus where

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

346 776 782 individuals can visit the saints on their own personal missions. Appendix 3A records the visits of groups and individuals on an ordinary Sunday. Their actions in the church are part of the standardized behavior incumbent upon all those who enter the building.

Communication with the saints is ensured either by touching and kissing their images or, if the images are enclosed in glass cases, by tapping the gl. with offerings of money. It is believed that one gains an audience [562] by pay..g for it. When groups larger than individual clusters of visitors enter the church, sexual segregation is observed (for example, when a male child enters with his mother on the occasion of a mass, he remains with her until more people arrive, then leaves her to stand on the male [788] side of the nave). Ritualized wailing is done by women only. After such a [152] demonstration the women show normal composure, since wailing is a standardized mode of communication, not an outburst of uncontrolled emotion. It is private and concerns the individual wailer and the saint to which she appeals; none of the other visitors in the church indicates any sign of response to these displays. Unless there is a focused activity going [794] on, such as a mass or series of baptisms, each visiting group is an autonomous unit, carrying out its own mission.

794 571 562 People visit the church most commonly in pairs of two. They congregate for mass in a pattern in which women and children enter first, and men, who linger in the plaza until the church is partially filled, enter in clusters and take their places on the male side of the nave. The religious and civil officials enter last, and the mayordomos, whose attendance is one of the obligations of their post, move toward the altar at the front. Men attend church less frequently than do women.

The School

346 621 875 [177] [178] Unlike the church, the school is regarded as an alien structure. Assistance in reconstruction and maintenance is given under pressure rather than voluntarily. Until fairly recently, schoolteachers too remained unintegrated in the community. In the early years of the school's existence, there was a rapid turnover of teachers. The employment of a schoolmaster with a wife and daughters stabilized the position after 1953. The school has be-

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

come the domain of the schoolmaster, who represents federal influence in the local community. He has rebuilt parts of the structure in the thirteen years he and his family have lived and worked in this building; it was his fortress when the Indians threatened to kill him for building a chicken coop obtruding into the street, and again when he interceded in a case of homicide. He has a small arsenal stored in his bedroom in preparation for any reversal of his position in the community. The school is his platform, the area he controls and from which he shouts to his compadres—the storekeeper, the fiscal, and the president—to come speak with him.

The long building is subdivided into four classrooms and the living quarters of the schoolmaster's family. The classrooms are furnished with crude benches and tables; blackboards and charts of birds, animals, and the alphabet decorate the walls. The back porch, converted to classrooms to accommodate the three hundred and fifty children, overflows with benches. The students' own materials—a notebook, pencil, and erasers—are provided by their parents. When a notebook is filled, the students industriously erase all the marks and reuse the book until it falls apart.

When I was in the village, the schoolmaster often encouraged visitors to share a Coca-Cola with him in his office. Here, surrounded by his books, his collection of artifacts of both genuine and spurious origin, a picture of the district inspector of federal schools pinning a medal on his chest, the flag of the Mexican republic, he could speak freely of the personal attacks and frustrations and of the rare satisfactions he encountered "in bringing civilization to the town." As he began to build up his political power in the community, the president and síndico often consulted with him on town affairs. Agents of the federal or departmental offices who came to town frequently communicated with him directly before going to the cabildo. The school became the arena for working out political programs and strategies. The schoolmaster prided himself on being the primary channel of communication between the outside world and the village.

The conflict of interest between the schoolmaster and the parents of the children over attendance in school has been ameliorated in recent years with the acceptance by some of the parents of education as an advantage. In the early years of compulsory education, physical force was used to round up the children. The traumatic experience of his first day in school

Third, there was opposition on the score that the president had never passed in any other public office. The only incident revealing the discontent was the firing of eight shots at (or above) the president's brother following the house festival on the eve of the inauguration.

The principales, who "formerly were the ones who ruled," no longer have a part in the power struggle

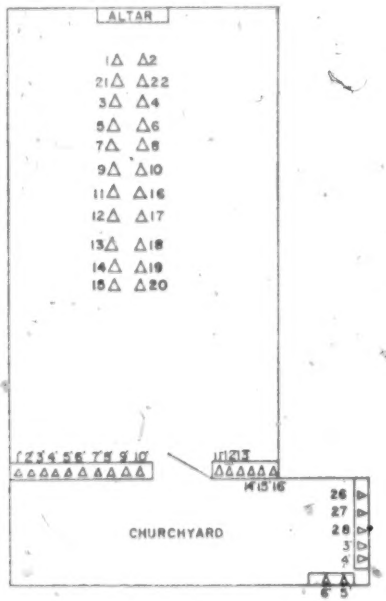

CHART 11 — NEW OFFICIALS INSIDE CHURCH, NEW YEAR'S DAY

OFFICIALS:
1-16 Mayordomos

Remaining numbers refer to officials listed in Charts 7-9.

which centers on party membership and economic competition. Their ceremonial role in rituals is preserved as a link with the past as well as a sign of continuity between old and new officials.

In the inauguration of the religious officials, divergence in the elicited and the observed event (App. 2, column 4) occurred first of all in the shift of locale for the common meal from the churchyard to the house of the *?ali?bal* instead of in the churchyard (App. 2, Q. 19). This was a clue to the power struggle going on in the church. When I questioned my informant about the disparity, he told me the following story:

[P. 223-B]

public in the procession around the plaza (App. 1, Q. 39). The mayordomos gather in the church specifically to view the new incumbents (App. 1, Q. 50). There is less public display of new officeholders in the case of the religious officials than in the case of civil officials.

The morphological description of the structure of a society is inadequate unless it includes role behavior as well as status positions. The behavioral data pro-

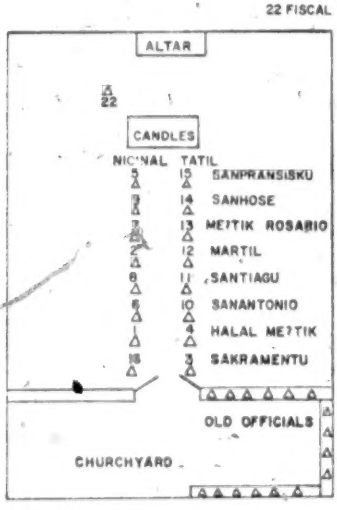

CHART 15 — NEW MAYORDOMOS INSIDE CHURCH, FIESTA OF SAN PEDRO SAN PABLO (OBSERVED)

vide the basis for describing the physiology of a culture, or how actors and social groups interrelate in carrying out tasks. In the inaugurations, the household emerged in the behavioral descriptions as an important ritual domain supporting the civil and religious hierarchy. Similarly, the asymmetrical relation between the role of religious officials in the civil inauguration and that of civil officials in the religious

[P. 228-A)